CLASSIFICATION OFFICE DECISION

Title of publication: 13 Reasons Why: Episode 12 (Tape 6, Side B)

Other known title(s): Not stated

OFLC ref: 1700158.011

Medium: Online Film

Distributor: Netflix

Director: Jessica Yu

Producer: Joseph Incaprera

Country of origin: United States

Language: English

Applicant: Chief Censor

Classification:	Objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 18 years, or who are accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Excisions: No excisions recommended

Descriptive note: Series deals with suicide, bullying and depression. Episodes may contain violence, sexual material, drug use, and frequent offensive language. Some episodes contain graphic depictions of suicide and rape.

Display conditions: None

Date of entry in Register: 27 April 2017

Date of direction to issue a label: 26 April 2017

Date of notice of decision: 26 April 2017

	Components	Running time
Timed component(s):	Episode Twelve, Tape 6, Side B.	61:48
Total running time:		61:48

Summary of reasons for decision:

'13 Reasons Why' is a complex and controversial series currently showing on (and made by) Netflix. The Chief Censor called in all 13 episodes of the series under s13(3) of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 (FVPC Act), having become aware of public concerns about the subject matter of the series. The series is based on the 2007 book of the same title, written by Jay Asher, and consists of thirteen episodes, each of which corresponds with the tapes left as a suicide note by the show's teenage narrator, Hannah Baker. The series has significant merit – it addresses issues that are highly relevant to young people, including suicide, sexual violence, bullying, and slut-shaming. These matters, particularly suicide, are dealt with in a complex manner throughout the 13 episodes. As part of the classification process, the Classification Office consulted with a variety of groups and individuals, including the Sexual Abuse Prevention Network, the Mental Health Foundation New Zealand, and some young people who had viewed the series. It was concluded that each of the episodes needs to be restricted to persons aged 18 or over, unless supervised by an adult viewer, ordinarily a parent but potentially another responsible adult, older sibling or guardian. This classification interferes with freedom of expression contained in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, but it is a reasonable and justifiable limitation on that right. The classification allows the intended audience of young people to continue to access the episodes, while providing the necessary intervention of adult supervision in order to keep them safe and able to sufficiently navigate the relevant but troubling issues that the series deals with.